RUTH KNUDSEN HANNER

THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Ruth Knudsen Hanner

(1901 - )

Mrs. Hanner's grandfather, Valdemar Knudsen, was born in Norway in 1820 and came to Kauai for his health in 1852. In 1856 he acquired a lease on property at Waiawa and was appointed "curator of the royal herds" on the Kekaha-Mana ahupua'a by Kamehameha IV. He gradually developed his stock of cattle and horses and became a successful rancher. In 1869 he married Annie Sinclair, the daughter of Elizabeth Sinclair who had purchased the Island of Niihau from the Hawaiian government in 1864. His life of adventure has been chronicled by his son, Eric A. Knudsen, and Gurre P. Noble in Kanuka of Kauai.

Mrs. Hanner contributes her own knowledge of the Knudsen family and their property at Waiawa in this interview. She tells of her father, Augustus Francis Knudsen, and his early interest in the comparative study of kahuna practices and Hinduism and his later involvement in Theosophy. There are stories about how the weeping willow was brought to Kauai, how the ancient Hawaiians made trails that were later traveled on in carriages, and about the reforesting of Kauai. Mrs. Hanner also recalls her first Christmas at Waiawa in 1903.

Mrs. J. A. Veech, Interviewer

# INTERVIEW WITH RUTH KNUDSEN HANNER

At her home in Kokee, Kauai, 96756

August 1971

H: Ruth Knudsen Hanner

V: Mrs. J. A. Veech

V: . . .Knudsen. Now do you want to tell. . . ?

H: No, I'm really Ruth Knudsen Hanner. (laughter)

V: Excuse me, that's right. Ruth Knudsen Hanner.

H: Yes. Yes. Well, I was born, unfortunately, in Oakland, California on January 6, 1901, my mother having gone up to California to be near her mother and sisters when I was born.

But my mother was Margaret Russell of California, her family having come from the South. In 1852 they went to California, so they also were pioneers. From Alabama and Tennessee, her parents came.

V: What was her father doing, do you know?

H: He was a journalist.

V: Oh.

H: He came out to California with a group of young southerners that they've always called The Southern Set in San Francisco, you know. [The Old Southern Set. RKH, 1980]

V: Um hm.

H: He came out as a bachelor with several horses that his father gave him to see if it'd be possible to be a journalist in California. And he was there for enough time to find out that, yes, he could make a living and so he went back and married my grandmother and they waited until their eldest child was two years old and then he brought her out to California by way of the Isthmus of Panama.

It was very strange. The very same time that my ma-

ternal grandparents were coming out, my grandfather Andrew Russell fell ill of what they called in those days Chagres River fever and nearly died. And my grandfather Valdemar Knudsen, just about the same time--it was almost the same month--was ill with Chagres River fever also on the route there at Panama on his way home from Norway.

V: Isn't that interesting.

H: Yes. Yes. But I've read a book by Bayard Taylor, describing that route. You see, there was a Delano Steamship Company. I heard this from a descendant of the Delanos. He was a distant cousin of President [Franklin Delano] Roosevelt. They were a company in Philadelphia and before gold was discovered in California, they decided that they could make money on the West Coast and everybody said they were crazy. And they sent two little steamships around the Horn [Cape Horn] and when they got up to the West Coast of Panama, there were hundreds of men waiting to be taken to San Francisco. Gold had been discovered. (recorder is turned off and on again)
Shall I tell more about their journey?

V: More about your mother.

H: You see, my mother was the only one of her family that came out here to Hawaii.

V: And how did she get here, now?

H: By marrying my father.

V: And he met her how?

H: In Berkeley. In Berkeley, California. Mrs. Welker, you know. Eliza Gay Welker, one of my father's first cousins, was married to a man named Welker and lived in Berkeley in a beautiful big old white house with an enormous yard. I used to go there and play when I was a little girl, when we visited with my mother's mother in California. And her mother-in-law, Old Mrs. Welker, gave a dinner party and she had an eligible son and she invited my mother to meet (chuckles) this son and my father was there, as a relative, you see, of Cousin Eliza's. And they met and fell in love almost at once, but it was two years after that before they married.

V: What was he doing on the Coast? Was he in school or. . . ?

H: No, that was very interesting. My father went for nearly four years to M.I.T. [Massachusetts Institute of Technol-

ogy]. His father had insisted on one son being an engineer, one a doctor, and one a lawyer. And my father had no wish to be an engineer and so he came back and was working on the ranch. In those days, you know, we had a very big ranch. All the land that was not in sugar we ranched and he became very, very interested in all the kahuna-ism and the psychic life of the Hawaiian religion and he was convinced that it was very closely connected with the Hindu religion, because he had been reading things of that sort.

That was the era, you know, when there was a first great interest in Hindu religion as an interesting thing and not something just to be scorned, you know, from the missionary angle. And so, he made up his mind that he would go to India and see what connections he could make between the old Hawaiian kahuna-ism and these various practices. Of course, India is so vast and has so many ideas but he only might find something.

In those days, in order to go to India you had to go to San Francisco and then take a boat that went direct but did not stop here in the Islands. And I don't know how they went. I suppose direct, the northern route, I don't know.

Anyway, he was in San Francisco for a few weeks, seeing our Cousin Eliza and other friends there. And so he continued on his way out to India and on the boat going out he met Colonel Alcott, who was the co-worker with H. P. [Helen Petrovna] Blavatsky and Annie Besant in starting the Theosophical Society. And Colonel Alcott got ahold of my father and got him so interested in Theosophy that he never continued his various studies, only just generally, and he stayed there in Adyar in India for two years and studied all these things that theosophists were going into --in for--at that time. And then later on he came back and my parents were married and he brought my mother out here in 1898. They were married in August 1898.

[Helen Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891) founded the Theosophical Society in 1875 in New York. Annie Wood Besant, born in London in 1847, became a devotee of Theosophy after joining the society in 1889. She founded the Central Hindu College in 1898 and the Central Hindu Girls' School in Benares in 1904. She also helped to found the Hindu University; organized the India Home Rule League; and in 1917, was president of the Indian National Congress. Lincoln Library of Essential Information, 1928.]

V: Maybe we'd better go back and say your father's name and who his father was, don't you think?

H: Oh yes. Well, my father was A. Francis Knudsen, who was the eldest son of Valdemar Knudsen. There were five in

that family: Ida, who married Harry von Holt; my father [Augustus Francis Knudsen], who married my mother, Margaret Russell; Maud, who married Herbert Garstin and lived in California; and then Uncle Eric, whom everybody knows here, was first married to Cecelia L'Orange, his first cousin once removed and they had four children and then his second wife was Hazel, whom we all know so well and love so much. And then the youngest brother was my uncle Arthur. He was five years younger than Uncle Eric and he studied medicine at Harvard and then, unfortunately, at a very early age--a few years after he was practicing medicine--he had dementia praecox and was in a sanitarium all his life. You see, that was before they were able to do shock treatment. And people told me that he was by far the most brilliant and the most charming of all that family. Yes. Wasn't that sad?

V: Then, when your father came back, did he work on the ranch continuously?

H: Yes, then when he came back in 1898, Uncle Eric had decided that he didn't want to practice law, but my father and mother were here alone at Waiawa for about two years, because Grandmother [Annie Sinclair Knudsen, Valdemar's wife] traveled with her brother, Francis Sinclair, and lived with them in Europe for awhile and Uncle Eric was finishing up his law. I think he'd promised to work a couple of years in a law firm in either Boston or New York. I think it was New York. And so, they had two years here and then when my mother found she was expecting me, they went to California and stayed about two years while Uncle Eric took over the ranch and Grandmother came home.

My earliest recollections, of course, is just before my third birthday. I can remember the first Christmas we had at Waiawa and the birth and death of my little brother the following month, really.

V: He was the only other one in your family, or did you have any other sisters and brothers?

H: No, my mother lost a baby early, before me, and then she lost my brother. He was a blue baby and, of course, the doctor advised her not to have any more. She was nearly forty, you see. She married rather late. That's why she couldn't have any more.

But I remember my first Christmas. Well, that would be the Christmas of 1903, because I was three on January 6, 1904 and my little brother was born on January 13th, just soon after that. You know, I remember it so well because we had a little coffee tree for a Christmas tree and of course I have lovely pictures of it because my father

was always snapping pictures.

In those days, there were quite a number of coffee trees growing among the lovely coconut trees at Waiawa.

V: Maybe you should say where Waiawa is. That's a name that's not used on this island [Kauai] very much anymore.

H: Oh! Well, Waiawa is no longer in existence really. It's nothing but a cane field now. But when my grandfather came here in 1852 for his health's sake, because after that bout of fever. . . .

He was in San Francisco and he and his partner had made a great deal of money with a transport business up into the Placer gold fields, you see. And he was very sick and it was quite cold up there in northern California. The doctor said he had to go to a warmer climate. And it's a very amusing story because Grandfather Knudsen was noted for his violent reaction to people. The doctor said, "Well, go to Peru. That's a warm, dry climate."

In those days, the little boats were anchored off San Francisco. Well, they were beached there; nothing but a beach there. And he got a man to row him out to a little boat that had a sign up, To Lima, Peru, and it was a Yankee boat with a Yankee captain's wife on board and, like many Europeans, he couldn't stand a Yankee twang and after a few minutes with that woman, he scurried down the gangplank, saying, "Never, never, never could I take a trip of three months with that woman on board!" (laughs) Always a family joke.

And then there was another little ship that said, To Hilo, Hawaii, and he said to the man, "That's a warm climate. Let's try that one." And he got on and there was no Yankee skipper's wife. (laughs)

V: I think that's a lovely story.

H: And then, strangely, they were blown, I suppose, over here to Koloa first, instead of going to Hilo first and he was so sick of the boat he got off at Koloa [Kauai] at the landing which we now own.

V: Hmm. That was eighteen fifty. . . ?

H: 1852. And we didn't know it was so early. The reason why I know it's 1852 is because Miss Mabel Wilcox, a long time ago in the 1950's when they were going through all the early papers of Ladd and Company, they found letters written in my grandfather's hand and dated. He had gotten a job as a clerk there for whatever it was in the form of a sugar company in 1852. [Koloa Plantation as of 1844]

V: Ladd and Robinson?

H: No, no. Robinson didn't come till later. No, no, no. I don't know what the history is. We could easily find that out. But that was what she told me. But we never realized he was there so soon.

["The actual founders of the sugar industry were three New Englanders by the names of William Ladd, William Hooper and Peter Allan Brinsmade who established the first systematic sugar plantation at Koloa, Kauai in 1835," according to William A. Simonds in KAMAAINA - A Century in Hawaii.]

And then he found out that there was some land for lease over on the dry part of the island. You see, he still needed a dry, hot climate and Koloa was a little bit blowy and wet. And this place, Waiawa, was an old chief's seat because there was a beautiful well and, when I was a little girl, we always used to go out and look at this well. I never was allowed to go there alone when I was small because it was dangerous. It was part of an old taro patch just beyond our stables there and that was where he got his water; and there were grass houses around there and very old coconuts, so it had long been a seat for the konohikis [overseers of the king's estate or crown land].

And two Europeans, a Norwegian named Gruben and an Englishman named Archer--Gruben and Archer, I think they're all recorded in the [Hawaiian] Historical Society--were trying to raise tobacco there. And they were fed up with the whole thing and wanted to go home and it seems that Archer was the son of an English consul in Norway that my grandfather's family had known long before that. Wasn't that a funny meeting in the middle of the Pacific? We always thought that was so funny.

Well anyway, they were nice gentlemen and they turned their lease over to my grandfather. And then, soon after that. . . . I was looking through the archives once to try to visualize that era. He was konohiki and he collected taxes for the area and for one year--I could easily check on this--all that he got in the way of taxes was thirteen dollars, most of them Mexican reals, and a hundred or so goat skins and that was all that area from the Waimea to Milolii produced.

Of course the natives all were pretty self-supporting because they had their own little patches of taro and so forth and went fishing, you see. And of course the old tax system of handing in your taro and all that had been abolished but, you see, the hides could be sold.

And then, along about that time--again, that could be checked; I don't know where my notes are about that--he was given what was called--he was made caretaker, or a

different word was used, of the royal herd which was just the same thing that Sam Parker had. There were these wild cattle everywhere and he was given the privilege of exploiting the wild cattle, you see, as well as saving the people from the ravages of those wild cattle. [John Palmer Parker, the father of Sam Parker who came to Hawaii in 1808, was a cattle hunter in the Kohala area on the Island of Hawaii and later developed his own cattle ranch, known as Parker Ranch.] [He was "curator of the royal herd."]

And so for many years he earned his living--he went from Koloa Plantation to Kekaha about 1853, I guess--by selling salted hides and tallow and sweet potatoes to the vessels that put in at Waimea on the China voyages, you see. And I remember as a child seeing these great big try-pots out behind our stables in which the tallow had all been tried. Yes.

V: How soon are you going to go into sugar?

H: Well, that of course didn't happen until the Kekaha Sugar Company was formed with [Paul] Isenberg. You see, it was Hackfeld and Company that did it, and (name indistinct)'s father was one of the first on that company and I don't know what other men were there. But my grandfather was a man of many ideas but, of course, he had no capital; he was just barely making a living. [Paul, Carl, and Otto Isenberg and George N. Wilcox and his brothers, Samuel W. and Albert S. Wilcox, erected the Kekaha sugar mill in 1881 while Valdemar Knudsen was in California trying to hire Chinese laborers to harvest the first crop. Two planters, a German named Meir and a Norwegian named Hans Peter Faye, were to share the proceeds and rent was paid to the Knudsens. This was the arrangement made by Paul Isenberg, whom Annie Knudsen had called on for help in the absence of her husband, Valdemar, realizing that the crop would otherwise be lost.]

And finally they decided that they could raise sugar on those hot plains by pumping up the water, because all of that sand land there, from Waimea over to Mana, has a good water level--water table--underneath and they could pump it up. And we used to have Kaunalewa pump and all of those pumps along there, so they started out.

And Isabelle told me--Isabelle Faye--that even before that started, H. P. Faye, her father, had started out at Mana, where the soil is so rich and so black, and had a little sugar plantation of his own and when they started the company they all went in together. I didn't know that until just the other day. I think someone told me that a few months ago. Of course all of these things can be checked. I'm just telling stories and I'm not too accurate. But I mean those. . .the year and the actual men, I

don't know. But of course, what was so marvelous for my grandfather was that, you see, it must have been well into the seventies before they really started that because here he had these little children and he was bemoaning the fact of how could he bring them up in this wild country with no education and so on. And the first thing he did, well, you see, he leased his land for which he paid a very low rental because they produced practically nothing and he leased it to the sugar company, so enough money--I don't know what it was--enough money in those days for him to pack up his family. And first he took Grandmother home to New Zealand because she was always homesick for New Zealand, and then they came back with a tutor for a year, and then they went to Europe for a good education and had two years in Vienna and two years in Berlin.

And I found out just recently that Grandfather became an American citizen in California. These papers. . .

V: Had he been born in Norway?

H: Yes, he was a Norwegian and I never knew that he became--I had always thought that he had either become a citizen of the--a subject of the Hawaiian crown or had just kept his Norwegian citizenship, but our cousin, Tinty Blackwell, who is the granddaughter of Maud Garstin, who was my grandmother's executrix, had all Grandmother's private and personal papers, which of course I had never seen, and among those papers were the citizenship papers of Valdemar Knudsen when he became an American citizen in San Francisco in 1852 before, evidently, he took a trip home to Norway.

They had made money very quickly and he went back to Norway with some money to show off to his family and to give them some money and it was on his way back, you see, that he got sick and then came down here [to Hawaii]. And then of course, he never went back to California because the next boat that brought him mail told him his partner had absconded with all their money and he was penniless, so that's why he got a job (laughing) right here. All of these things are so interesting.

V: He was over here, so far away, and yet determined his children were going to be well-educated.

H: Yes, yes. Well, you see, they were of a good Norwegian burgher--bourgeois family, with Danish. They were Danish extraction, I think, three generations before in the family history. An officer in the Danish army settled in Krageroe and his son Knud Knudsen became mayor of Kristiansund and we have a very beautiful little daguerreotype of him--a beautiful profile; a very aristocratic-looking man. And

of course, you know how, I think, the Norwegian bourgeois are just about as proud as kings because a lot of them say they are descendants of the Vikings. Well, of course we weren't, because three generations before that there was a Danish army officer in our family. But of course Valdemar Knudsen had a brilliant education and he was a great linguist. He learned the Hawaiian language very easily and Grandmother told me, when they were in New Zealand he began to speak Maori almost immediately. He just listened to the differences.

V: They were just enough alike so that he could do it.

H: Yes. Yes. But then of course he spoke several other European languages and had learned English. But I mean that wonderful European education that they had, even in those days.

Well, he had two brothers that had come over to New York with him who stayed in New York and we keep in touch. In fact, you've heard of the Northrop planes, haven't you? The Northrop airplanes? Well, Jack Knudsen Northrop is a second cousin, a descendant of one of my grandfather's brothers, you see.

V: He stayed there.

H: Yes. Yes. They stayed in New York. Their family went to California but they were all people with much ambition and while they never made very much money, they were apt to do interesting things. (laughs)

V: Now shall we go back to your father? Now we had him back at the Islands.

H: Yes. After he took his trip to India and became interested in Theosophy, of course he kept on with all of that study. He married my mother and came back here in 1898 and then I said that they had gone away and I didn't get back until I was nearly three and I can remember that first Christmas. And I wanted to say something about the coffee trees, because that's a lovely story.

We had these coffee trees under the coconut trees and the coconut trees were some very very old ones. The boles were covered, they had been there so long. And then there were lots that my grandfather and grandmother planted. There was one little group planted in an A and the other in a V that they planted the first year they were married --Annie and Valdemar, you see? And then under the trees were these coffee trees. Of course, when I was a child nobody thought of picking beans. They were so old that they didn't produce much.

But Isabelle Faye told me this and I didn't know this from my side of the family that in those early days coffee was so very, very expensive in Norway and they loved it and that her grandmother--that is, H. P. Faye's mother was my grandfather's sister--that all the sisters would be so thrilled because they would get little bags coffee sent them from Uncle Valdemar, as they called him, here at Waiawa where he had raised the coffee. And of course in those days, he was there in the 1850's. I think it was 1840 and earlier, the Rhodes brothers were trying to raise coffee at Hanalei.

V: I didn't know that.

H: Yes, well now, I think Charlie [Charles Atwood] Rice told me this--it was one of the Rices told me that Hanalei used to be the most absolutely beautiful valley; that you'd stand on the bluff and look over there and it would be a mass of white blossoms when the coffee was in bloom. At first they tried coffee and then later they tried mulberries for silkworms.

V: Um hm. That's at Grove Farm, the mulberries. That's what happened to coffee.

H: Yes, well, but the coffee was the first thing, I believe, the Rhodes brothers tried. They must have come here very early because it was, I think, 1841 or so and their sister, who was married to a Mr. Brown, came and settled in Wailua and built a lovely home there. He was the one that brought the weeping willows to Hanalei. You've heard that story, of course?

V: No. No.

H: Well, he was a great horticulturist and planned gorgeous gardens for the nobility and all of that and they came over with all their family treasures which are still in the von Holt family because Old Mrs. Brown was a grandmother of my cousin, Katherine [Mrs. Henry B.] Caldwell, [nee von Holt] who is the von Holt line. Mr. Harry von Holt's mother was either a Brown or the daughter of a Brown. The daughter of the Browns, I think.

Well anyway, they were very charming people and came out with their lovely old paintings and lovely things and I think Koamalo describes how he had this gorgeous place right here but he was so used to the English way of doing things, you know, that he lost money. He didn't realize he had to watch every man doing every bit of work and so they went up to Honolulu. They came to Hawaii because her brothers had had this enterprise--all this wonderful

enterprise going in Hanalei.

They came out in 1841 by sailing vessel, of course, around the Horn and they stopped at St. Helena and the thing to do there was to get on horses and go up to Napoleon's grave, which I believe is inland and high and surrounded by weeping willows. He had his pocket knife with him and he cut off several branches and kept them alive--little tiny stalks--in his old-fashioned shaving mug in fresh water for the rest of the journey and planted them at Hanalei. [He: Mr. Brown]

V: I'd never heard that story. That's a wonderful one.

H: Isn't that a lovely one? I love that. Yes. I think it is in Ida K. von Holt's book that was privately printed, you know, about Stories of Long Ago.

Well, and then you know, the coffee trees that are still up Hanakapiai Valley. . .

V: Yes, there's plenty up there.

H: But the Deverills planted that. Sanford Deverill's father, the father of all the Deverills that we knew, he planted that and, of course, he had wonderful coffee but it wasn't economically sound to do it in such a distant valley.

V: You said that the people that [Valdemar] got the leases from were trying tobacco. Did they ever make anything of the tobacco?

H: I don't know. It may be that my grandfather kept on with that. You see, in those days you just turned your hands at anything that would bring in an honest penny because it was so hard to earn anything at all. 'Course he had his own taro patches, the lease rent was very small and he had the official job of konohiki. He must have gotten a small salary for that. And by the time he married my grandmother in 1867, which was before the sugar started, he had enough money to take her back to Norway--his first trip back to Norway--and show her off to his people.

[In Kanuka of Kauai, it states that Archer decided to sell the lease because "his friend was dead, his crops a failure." The lease "included the cattle and horses Archer and Gruben had owned, but as time went on he increased his stock continuously. . .and improved his herds."]

And in England they bought a rosewood Georgian table which looks just like koa. We always thought it was koa until the 1930's when I had it in California and an expert told me it was rosewood. That was shipped around the Horn and then they had koa furniture, copying the early Victor-

ian which goes very well with the simple Georgian table and that was the furniture I still have and which I am willing to Betsy Toulon [Mrs. Alfred J. Toulon, Jr.; nee Elizabeth Sinclair Knudsen] and Anne Baldwin [Mrs. Wilfred James Baldwin; nee Anne Cecilia Knudsen] because they're my first cousins, you see, and they all remember the old house.

And it was such fun. A few years ago I met our Norwegian second cousin and she told me that her mother had been named for my grandmother, Annie Sinclair, because she was born the year that my grandfather took her, 1867, back to Norway as a bride. She was a new bride, so the new baby was named for her. Isn't that charming? There's so many little things like that you'd never get in a real history.

V: That's right. That's right. And they're lost unless you record them. Well now, you got to the coffee trees. What else about that Christmas?

H: Oh, well that Christmas. . . . Of course, we had--see, my parents, when they came back in 1898, were the smart young people of that day and my father had a camera and of course they had to give a ball. And Waiawa, there was no place to dance on. It was just a big H of a house with a veranda all the way around and so they built a lovely dance floor below one of the stairways, under the great big tree, and roofed it with coconut leaves, just as a temporary dancing place. And of course then everybody lived on that for ever after. And then they roofed it permanently, you see, so we had the Christmas tree down on that lanai and I can remember it very, very well. And of course the pictures that show the toys I received at that time, which I played with for years afterwards. I loved that little Christmas tree with the coffee blossoms on it.

V: It'd be beautiful with the berries around, too.

H: Yes, and the tinsel and so on. And then soon after that, there was this very sad thing that happened to my mother, bearing another child that happened to be a little boy who they named Russell. And of course she did it in spite of warnings from doctors that she should never have another child because she was nearly thirty-eight when I was born and had nearly died. In those days, you know, awful things happened. And here was this lovely little baby but it was a blue baby and of course in those days they couldn't do anything. And so he was buried up in a little cemetery up Hoea Valley and I know I thought at one time of doing something about having the remains moved but it was all so long ago that we couldn't do it, so we did nothing about

it.

But then that summer is what I remember so well because, you see, then I was well over three--being three in January--and I had a charming little Japanese nurse called Ito and she worked for us for twenty-three years. She never worked for anybody else. And I remember going up to Halemanu. In those days we did it all by horseback, 'cause that was long before the automobile, and we used to go up to Halemanu on horseback and our supplies would come up on a great big wagon drawn by mules and horses. But the first part of the journey was just a horses'trail up Waiawa ridge and the big wagon had been taken up in pieces because there was no road up there. There was no road up the bluff until the plantations began planting sugar up on the high bluffs and put in a road. It was too expensive for a mere rancher to build, you know.

V: So it was just a trail and they put everything on the horse's back until. . .

H: Up to the top and, you see, they'd taken this great wagon up. My grandfather had done that years and years before when my grandmother was having her babies. He had taken a little phaeton up there in pieces and she would drive along with her babies in this phaeton and with the outriders and the cowboys to help and they had made a rough little track up to near the Pukapele. And you know, the interesting thing was--not many people know this--the Hawaiians had a finishing shed for making their canoes just below Pukapele and they would drag the logs up from the forest of Milolii and they would work there and hollow it out to make them light and then they would carry them, two rows of men abreast with this huge hollowed-out log between them. So they made a path wide enough for a carriage to go.

And the old Hawaiian path--I had a picture up until a few years ago of part of it that was still extant--would go right down past Pukapele and came down the ridge just above Pokii, the ridge to the east of where the road goes down now, and then they took them right down to the beach in front of where the mill is [at Kekaha] and there's where the finishing sheds were and where they put the outriggers on and so forth, you see.

V: Um hm. The two rows of men walking would make two tracks just the size for a buggy.

H: Yes. Yes. And so you see, what my grandfather had done way back in the 1870's when Grandmother was having her babies and they had all these little babies that couldn't ride and so on, he had made this little wagon track and

used the greater part of the old Hawaiian trail and then extended it up to Halemanu ridge there and then they would leave the wagon there and do the little bit down to Halemanu on horseback. In fact, we didn't have a road down to Halemanu until 1908--1907 or '08--when my father got mad. We began having these big house parties and he got mad and made a road to accomodate the guests. Yes.

V: This was summer vacation. They didn't do any raising of anything or were there cattle up there then?

H: Well of course, you see, our ranch. . . . See, my grandfather never had enough money to build any fences. He just exploited the cattle and kept them down. And then, when my father and Uncle Eric came back from college--of course in those days that was the beginning of conservation, the beginning of all the things that people are doing so much about now--and as soon as their father died in 1898 also, they went down to the ranch and decided that they had to save the forest. And the cattle have always been the worst menace of all the forests on all the islands, you see, and so the first thing they did with their inheritance was to build a fence from Puuhinehine, just about where Mists' house is now below the view, from the canyon right down to the sea and they kept all of their cattle below that and started in killing off the wild cattle. And they used to let everyone go, anyone who wanted to go up and kill cattle, and then they'd have these big hunting parties with all the terrible cattle stories, you know, (chuckles) and then by 1916 all the cattle were killed off and the forests had begun to come back.

As soon as we became a territory, the United States government sent out a trained forester and the first man to come out as a forester was a delightful man named Ralph Hosmer. He was a Bostonian and he became a great friend of ours and he used to come up there and visit. I have pictures of him, in fact. I think some that I gave the Historical Society show a picture of Ralph. And his idea was that we had to reforest with other trees than the Hawaiian trees and he used to give my father seeds--kakaka seeds and Asian koa seeds or rather Tasmanian koa, I think it is --and we used to go along with bags on our saddles and throw those out. [They were Tahitian koa seeds. RKH, 1980]

V: Johnny Appleseed.

H: Yes, and then people got mad and said, "Now look, these are going to take the forests over but they're a rather delicate tree, both of them, and they only live a short while."

END OF SIDE 1/1ST TAPE

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcribed and edited by Katherine B. Allen

Edited by Ruth Knudsen Hanner, 1980

Subject Index

# THE WATUMULL FOUNDATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

In May 1971, the Watumull Foundation initiated an Oral History Project.

The project was formally begun on June 24, 1971 when Katherine B. Allen was selected to interview kamaainas and longtime residents of Hawaii in order to preserve their experiences and knowledge. In July, Lynda Mair joined the staff as an interviewer.

During the next seventeen months, eighty-eight persons were interviewed. Most of these taped oral histories were transcribed by November 30, 1972.

Then the project was suspended indefinitely due to the retirement of the foundation's chairman, Ellen Jensen Watumull.

In February 1979, the project was reactivated and Miss Allen was recalled as director and editor.

Three sets of the final transcripts, typed on acid-free Permalife Bond paper, have been deposited respectively in the Archives of Hawaii, the Hamilton Library at the University of Hawaii, and the Cooke Library at Punahou School.